

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-42 were rejected. Applicants have canceled claims 10, 18, 27, 36 and 41 and amended claims 1, 2, 9, 16, 20, 21, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 38, 39, 40, and 42. These amendments do not add any new matter. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1-9, 11-17, 19-26, 28-35, 37-40, and 42 will remain pending in the present patent application. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are requested.

Objection of Claims 10, 29, 38, and 40

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 10, 29, 38, and 40. Applicants have canceled claim 10, and thus the objection to this claim is moot. Furthermore, Applicants have amended claims 29 and 40 to depend on independent claims 28 and 39 respectively, thus correcting the self dependency issue. Finally, Applicants have amended claim 38 to recite “performing at least one of the” per the Examiner’s suggestion. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner remove the objections to these claims.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Applicants have canceled claim 36, and thus the rejection to this claim is moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 16 and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner stated that “a claim that recites a program should have the program embodied on a computer readable medium...” Office Action, page 4. Applicants have amended claims 16 and 42 to include “a computer readable medium” per the Examiner’s

suggestion. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner remove the rejection of claim 16 and 42.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 21-26, 28, 29, 32-37, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Barton et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,636,776; hereinafter "Barton"). The Examiner also rejected claims 6 and 38-41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barton in view of Vaidya (U.S. Patent No. 6,051,805; hereinafter "Vaidya"). The Examiner only objected to claims 7, 10, 13-15, 18, 20, 27, 30, and 31, and stated these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 9, 16, 21, 26, 32, 38, and 42 to include claimed elements of the objected to claims. Thus, Applicants believe all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 1 is currently amended to include "requesting welding process data and dimensional data from a user to enable the system to establish a cross-sectional area of the weld joint and produce a comparison between using each of the plurality of welding processes to weld a weld joint based partially on the established cross-sectional area of the weld joint."

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 10 included the element of "wherein the requested dimensional data for the weld joint is adapted to enable the processor-based device to establish the cross-sectional area of the weld joint." The currently amended independent claim 1 now includes this element. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references, nor would it be obvious from these references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 1 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 9 is currently amended to include “enabling the processor-based device to establish the cross-sectional area of the weld joint based on the dimensional data provided by the user.”

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 10 included the element of “wherein the requested dimensional data for the weld joint is adapted to enable the processor-based device to establish the cross-sectional area of the weld joint.” The currently amended independent claim 9 now includes this element. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 9 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 16 is currently amended to include “to enable the processor-based device to establish the volume of the specific weld joint.”

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 18 included the element of “wherein the request for weld joint dimensional data enables the processor-based device to establish the volume of the specific weld joint.” The currently amended independent claim 16 now includes this element. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 16 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 21 is currently amended to include “enabling the processor-based device to establish the volume of the specific weld joint based on the requested dimensional data.”

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 16 included the element of “wherein the request for weld joint dimensional data enables the processor-based device to establish the volume of

the specific weld joint.” The currently amended independent claim 21 now includes this element. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 21 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 26 is currently amended to include “the request comprises providing an image of the selected weld joint type on the visual display, the image having a identifier corresponding to a dimension of the weld joint.”

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 27 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 27 included the element of “wherein providing a request for dimensional data comprises providing an image of the selected weld joint type on the visual display, the image having a identifier corresponding to a dimension of the weld joint.” The currently amended independent claim 26 now includes this element. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 26 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 32 is currently amended to include “providing a program to enable the processor-based device to establish a cross-sectional area of the weld joint.”

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 10 included the element of “wherein the requested dimensional data for the weld joint is adapted to enable the processor-based device to establish the cross-sectional area of the weld joint.” The currently amended independent claim 32 now includes this element. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 32 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 38 is currently amended to include “providing a duration for performing each of the plurality of activities associated with the manufacturing process including the duration of a first cycle time for welding a weld joint using a first welding process and a second cycle time for welding a weld joint using a second welding process” and “providing a potential decrease in the duration for performing at least one of the plurality of activities associated with the manufacturing process, wherein the potential decrease includes a reduction in at least one of the pre-weld activity time and post-weld activity time by using the second welding process.”

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 7 was dependent on claim 6. Claim 6 included the element of “wherein processing the requested data comprises producing a comparison between a first cycle time for welding the weld joint using a first welding process and a second cycle time for welding the weld joint using a second welding process.” Claim 7 included the element of “wherein requesting data from a user comprises requesting pre-weld activity time and post-weld activity time associated with the first welding process, and the comparison between the first cycle time and second cycle time includes a reduction in at least one of the pre-weld activity time and post-weld activity time by using the second welding process.” The currently amended independent claim 38 now includes both of these elements. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that these claimed elements are not disclosed in any of the references, nor would it be obvious from these references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 38 and its dependent claims.

Independent Claim 42 is currently amended to include “a map of activities associated with a manufacturing process including a first cycle time for a welding operation using a first welding process and a second cycle time for a welding operation using a second welding process and to enable the user to input potential decreases in the duration of performing at least one activity associated with the manufacturing process wherein the potential decreases include a reduction in at least one of the pre-weld activity time and post-weld activity time by using the second welding process.”

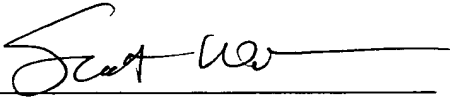
In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 7 was dependent on claim 6. Claim 6 included the element of “wherein processing the requested data comprises producing a comparison between a first cycle time for welding the weld joint using a first welding process and a second cycle time for welding the weld joint using a second welding process.” Claim 7 included the element of “wherein requesting data from a user comprises requesting pre-weld activity time and post-weld activity time associated with the first welding process, and the comparison between the first cycle time and second cycle time includes a reduction in at least one of the pre-weld activity time and post-weld activity time by using the second welding process.” The currently amended independent claim 42 now includes both of these elements. Furthermore, Applicants have reviewed the cited references and agree with the Examiner that the claimed element is not disclosed in any of the references. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 42.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: September 25, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Woloson", written over a horizontal line.

Scott E. Woloson
Reg. No. 57,082
FLETCHER YODER
P.O. Box 692289
Houston, TX 77269-2289
(281) 970-4545